11. Economic Development Board.—Last year I pointed out that one of the regrettable features of the administration of the State was the utter lack of co-ordination and correlation among the several Development Departments. With a view to remedy this defect, an Economic Development Board was created towards the close of 1096. This board, which is composed of 20 members, of whom only seven are officials and on which all the main Development Departments and the various material interests of the country such as agriculture, industries, commerce and banking are represented, has been organised with the object of co-ordinating the work of the Development Departments and of securing the benefit of expert knowledge and practical experience in matters affecting the economic well-being of the people. Government are glad to note that the lines of work laid down by the board for its own guidance are sound and that its salutary influence has already begun to be felt by every Development Department.

12. Agriculture and Fisheries.—The progress of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries has continued unabated. The grant for this department which stood at Rs. 0·95 lakhs in 1094 has been raised to Rs. 2·015 lakhs during 1097. Seven Travancoreans have been deputed for agricultural training at Puna and Nagpur, and two officers of the department, viz., the Agricultural Chemist and the Mycologist, have been granted study leave with allowances to proceed to Europe for higher technical studies. Arrangements have been completed for opening an Agricultural Middle School at Alwaye in Edavam next. The analysis of soils and the experiments on agricultural methods and manures and combating plant pests are proceeding apace. The popularity of the manures introduced by the department has so far increased that manures to the value of about Rs. 50,000 found a sale from the Government Depôts in 1096. Arrangements have been made for the expansion of these sales by the appointment of commission agents, the expenditure on account of their commission being borne by the Government. Demonstrations of the motor tractor should have convinced the punja ryots of the feasibility of giving a timely ploughing to their fields before inundation so as to render them fit for annual cultivation. As a result of the experiments carried out by the department, it is reported that 3,000 acres of punja land in Kuttanad have been already brought under annual cultivation and Government have no doubt that the motor tractor demonstrations conducted by the department would afford a further stimulus to this profitable innovation. The value of green manure to ryots has been recognised by exempting green manure trees leased on kuthagapattam from payment of rent to Government and the Director of Agriculture has been asked to open a green manure seed depôt in South Travancore. Steady efforts are being put forth to popularise scientific fish-curing and the manufacture of fish oil and fish guano, and four fish-curing yards have been newly opened. It is in contemplation to send a good mechanic shortly to Chaliyam in Malabar to study the fish-canning industry with a view to its introduction in Travancore. The law relating to the protection of fish against indiscriminate and wanton destruction has been placed on a sounder basis by the passing of Regulation XI of 1097.

13. Industries.—Dr. Barker, the head of the Department of Industries, having proceeded on leave preparatory to retirement in April last, the working of that department was entrusted to Mr. Chakko, the State Geologist, in addition to his own duties. Last year, I characterised the policy pursued by Dr. Barker as one of drift. Since his departure, the work of the department has been mainly directed towards the rejection of what was unsound and the consolidation and improvement of what was good in the old arrangements. The preliminaries for the flotation of a company with a capital of 12 lakhs of rupees for the manufacture of sugar from palmyra jaggery in South Travrncore, in the shares and direction of which Government have resolved to substantially participate, have been settled, and a formal agreement in the matter will shortly be entered into. The control of industrial and technical education has been assumed by the department, and the usefulness of the technical schools at Nagercoil and Trivandrum has been greatly enhanced. A weaving instructor has been doing peripatetic propaganda work among cottage weavers during the past nine months, and his work has been so much appreciated by the public as to call for a

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